

SOKSISTOMSIN

Siksika Health Services  
Newsletter

ISSUE: August 2021



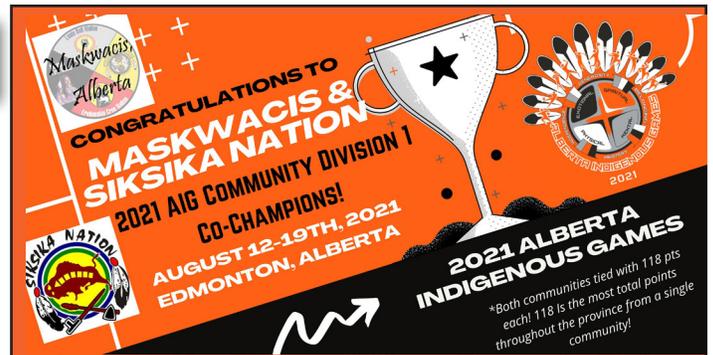
# Alberta Indigenous Games

So excited to announce our Inaugural AIG Community Division 1 Champions Siksika Nation and Maskwacis! We actually had a tie between the two communities, with each being awarded 118 points exactly!

Siksika had 10 Gold Medals, 3 Silver Medals, 6 Bronze Medals and had 12 participation points. Maskwacis had 3 Gold Medals, 12 Silver Medals, 3 Bronze Medals and 28 participation points (teams, individuals that didn't medal).

Every Siksika athlete on every team played a major part in getting to be a champion! The teams that didn't medal but that got a participation point played a major part. All the cross country runners that earned points played a major role!

Congrats to both communities in setting the bar for the future with the record at 118 total points!



Jr. Girls Basketball Team



Sr. Boys Basketball Team



Long Distance Running Team



Mini Basketball Team



Sr. Girls Basketball Team



Co-ed Lacross Team



Jr Boys Basketball Team

# Many Guns Boxing Grand Opening

Siksika Health Services, in collaboration with Siksika Mental Health and Parks and Recreation created the Many Guns Boxing & Fitness Center. The goal is to have a place for maatapiiks to keep physically, mentally and emotionally fit through exercise and training.

The Many Guns Fitness Center is located in the business plaza and will be hosting several programs within the next couple of months. For more information or to register for programs, contact Manny Yellow Fly at the Many Guns Boxing & Fitness Center at 403-962-0038.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank Strater Crowfoot for his generous donation of the Children and Youth Boxing Workshop.



## Siksika Health and Calgary Hitmen Sign a Historic Memorandum of Understanding

The Calgary Hitmen Hockey Club and Siksika Health Services have signed a first of its kind Memorandum of Understanding (MOU).

The historic partnership commits to several working goals which will be carried out in the months and years ahead. Among the pillars is to address stereotypes and racism by advancing inclusion in our communities through the promotion of the Blackfoot culture, language and history. A second key component is to promote healthy lifestyles for all youth and to highlight the benefits of participation in sport.

“On behalf of the Calgary Hitmen organization I want to express our sincere thanks and appreciation to Chief Crowfoot, Tyler White and the entire Siksika Nation for the opportunity to partner and foster change, education and reconcili-action in our communities,” said Hitmen Vice President Mike Moore. “In the past few years we have started to build a strong foundation with our partnership by introducing initiatives including the Every Child Matters game. The signing of the MOU has been two years in the making and is monumental in adding strength and commitment to address racism in our communities, provide a platform for cultural education and utilize leadership and resources in the promotion of healthy lifestyles for all youth.”

“Thank you to the Calgary Hitmen for being true partners in reconcili-action,” commented Tyler White, CEO of Siksika Health Services. “We are continuously grateful for the support and encouragement that they have given Siksika Nation over the past couple of years.”

To commemorate the agreement, a ceremonial signing took place at the Siksika Health and Wellness Centre which included an exchange of gifts.

Other highlights in the MOU include:

Using mentors, Hitmen players and alumni to encourage recruitment, participation and retention of young hockey players with an added focus of helping to grow other sports, recreation opportunities, and physical literacy. Engage to the full extent Siksika Health Services expertise to promote healthy lifestyles and continue to work to understand and educate on harm reduction during the Opioid Crisis.

This agreement builds on the existing working relationship between the Hitmen, Siksika Nation and Siksika Health Services. Past highlights include the Every Child Matters game held on February 1, 2020 at Scotiabank Saddledome which promoted and celebrated the Blackfoot culture. The Every Child Matters game will now become an annual event as part of the MOU with the upcoming celebration to take place on Saturday, January 15, 2022 when the Hitmen host the Prince Albert Raiders.



# Naahsiks - Our Grandparents

The Siksika Elders Lodge (SEL) continues to take precautions to protect our beloved residents. Here is an update that outlines the current COVID-19 protocols in place for the Siksika Elders Lodge:

For Visitors:

- Visitors are encouraged to book prior to visiting a family member at the Lodge. Call 403-734-5721 to book a visit.
- Masks will be required in all indoor common areas; masks can be removed in private rooms if the resident prefers.
- If a visitor is not fully vaccinated, masks must be worn at all times in all areas of the building, including private rooms.
- Everyone entering the Siksika Elders Lodge building will go through a health assessment screening.

- Temperature checks will remain in place at this time.
- Continued bi-weekly testing for all SEL staff & residents.

These policies and standards are put in place to protect the staff and residents of Siksika Elder's Lodge. Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic response, Siksika Nation has continuously maintained stricter recommendations than Alberta because we have a higher risk of severe consequences in Siksika due to living circumstances, overcrowding, and the high prevalence of chronic conditions.

For more information please call the Siksika Elders Lodge @ 403-734-5721.

## Siksikapowsin – Blackfoot Language

Our beautiful Siksikapowsin has carried us far and wide,  
in the four directions of:

Physical - Mental - Spiritual - Emotional

Our powerful journey, enduring fear, and  
our new life will be begin.

Words of the month (spelling of Blackfoot Words is phonetic)

“Oki” - hello

“Sukapii” – good

“Itah-mik-scaw-no-do-knee” – good morning

“Itah-mop-bii” – happy(good) time

“Aki’moi’tskiik” – Love one Another/Protect one Another

“Kah-kii-tkistoo-koo” – This is our shot

“Aisokinakio’p” – Healing (our community/clinic)

“Abii-stu-too-kii” – Creator

“Omahkiitahpiiks” – Elders (Seniors)

“Matah-piiks” – People

“Ii-kahkiima-kiik” – Perseverance (try harder)

Thank you, Issapa’kii – Floria Duck Chief, SHS Sr. Cultural Advisor

# COVID-19 Variants in Siksika



The best way to protect yourself and others from all current and future strains of COVID-19 is to get fully vaccinated.

At this time, Siksika Health Services can confirm that the B.1.617 COVID variant of concern, otherwise known as the Delta variant, has been identified on Siksika Nation. The Delta variant has been detected in countries around the world, including across Canada and Alberta.

Siksika Health Services Communicable Disease Control (CDC) Team is actively following-up with anyone in Siksika Nation who may have been exposed, to provide information, direction and support. Siksika continues to provide a very high level of service for testing, contact tracing and support for those isolating, including mental health, food security, access to health services and isolation options, compared to any jurisdiction in Alberta.

Variants of concern have become the dominant strains of the COVID-19 virus in Alberta. The Delta variant is the most aggressive COVID-19 variant to-date, and may be capable of reinfecting people who have previously had COVID-19. Variants of concern have one or more of the following traits:

- \* are more contagious and spread more easily than the original strain
- \* cause more severe illness, which could result in more hospitalizations and deaths
- \* have the same symptoms as the original virus, including cough, fever, shortness of breath, runny nose, sore throat, etc.

As the Delta variant is much more likely to cause illness in people with only one dose of vaccine, it is vitally important for everyone to get both doses of COVID vaccine as soon as they are eligible. This will likely continue to be the case with new variants of concern that emerge over the next year. The best way to protect yourself, your family, your co-workers, and your friends from all current and future strains of COVID-19 is to get fully vaccinated.

People who are fully immunized (14+ days after their second dose of COVID vaccine) can still be infected and experience illness with the Delta variant, but they have enhanced protection against severe outcomes. People who are not fully immunized with two doses of COVID vaccine are NOT protected against severe outcomes from the Delta variant. Complete immunization is

# COVID 19 Variants in Siksika

important to protect yourself and each other, in particular: those who cannot be immunized, for example, children under the age of 12 years old.

## COVID-19 Immunization for Siksikawa:

First and second doses of COVID-19 immunization is available to Siksika Nation members 12+ (including those who are turning 12 in 2021), and for those who live or work in Siksika or the surrounding communities of Gleichen, Cluny, and Arrowwood, on a walk-in basis at the Siksika Health & Wellness Centre (no appointments required). In-home vaccine appointments for Siksikawa can be scheduled by calling Siksika Home Care at 403-734-5695.

## Isolation Requirements:

At this time, it remains a requirement under public health order to isolate if you have new and/or worsening illness symptoms or if you've tested positive for COVID-19. Siksika Health Services recommends isolating if you're a contact of someone who has tested positive for COVID-19. This is to help prevent spread of the virus by reducing the number of people that an ill person comes in contact with during the time they may be contagious.

Those with new or worsening symptoms of any kind should continue to stay home, self-isolate and get tested for COVID-19. Please respect the privacy of any individuals and households who are affected. Those who are tested and who come forward are doing their part to protect the community.

COVID-19 testing is available in Siksika at the drive-thru (white tents near the baseball diamonds) between 10:00am-1:00pm daily, or by calling the COVID-19 Response Unit (CRU) dispatch at 403-734-5688, 7 days per week.

While COVID-19 variants of concern are more aggressive and infectious than the original form of the virus, public health measures such as physical distancing and wearing masks are effective in helping prevent spread. Here's a reminder of recommended public health measures that can help protect ourselves and one another by reducing the spread of COVID-19:

- \*Keep physical distance (at least 2 metres) from others who are not in your household/cohort;
- \*Wear a mask when physical distancing is not possible, especially indoors;
- \*Wash or sanitize hands regularly, especially after touching commonly touched surfaces;
- \*Clean and disinfect commonly touched surfaces often;
- \*Refrain from sharing food/ drinks, and avoid using common serving utensils for food/drinks;
- \*Cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue or your elbow;
- \*Avoid non-essential travel.

Anyone in Siksika having trouble dealing with anxiety or emotional stress can call 403-734-5660, 9am-5pm Monday-Friday to speak with a Siksika Health Services Mental Health Therapist. This is a safe and confidential service

# Run As One

This year Siksika Health Services, Community Wellness, Mental Health, SN7 and Parks and Recreation collaborated in hosting our annual Run As One Youth Awareness Week. Our 17th annual event was well thought out to work around the COVID-19 restrictions, this included, stretching our week long experience to 2 weeks long.

The Week began with the first of its kind on the Run As One Agenda. The Blackfoot Youth Culture Camp. Our camp was held at Blackfoot Crossing Historical Park and we had 38 Youth participants who got a very exclusive insight to our Siksika Way of life. We were fortunate to welcome fluent Blackfoot speakers who presented and taught the Language throughout the duration of three days. The excitement did not end there, throughout the three days, our youth experienced Traditional Blackfoot Bow and Arrow making, Blackfoot Horsemanship skills, moccasin making, and Rafting the Bow River. We are so excited to have had a successful Blackfoot youth immersion Camp and we hope to incorporate it into our agenda permanently. Our intent was to immerse our youth to our Blackfoot way of life through traditional teachings from our Elders with youth leaders helping the process and we were beyond successful in reaching our goal. We hope to have more camps throughout the year. Thank you to Jarrett Pretty Young Man for his amazing leadership skills in leading the Culture Camp.

The next activity was led by Braden Many Bears, another first in Run As One History the Outdoor Youth Excursion. Our committee was created with the intent to support our Siksika youth by providing opportunities to experience fun and confidence-building outdoor activities.

Day 1 consisted of an exciting whitewater rafting adventure on the Kananaskis River in Canmore AB. Our participants experienced a river tour down the rapids of the Bow River





and had an unforgettable team-bonding experience.

Day 2 consisted of a guided tour of the Rat's Nest Cave a wild, undeveloped cave under Grotto Mountain in the Canadian Rockies. These experiences definitely left a lasting impression on our participants.

The Reztopian StoryJam For The Artificially Intelligent was a 2 day event which brought youth together with mentors to work towards the goal of making a short film.

Day 1 saw 20 youth and 3 mentors come together to devise a story. The day started with improv games with acting/improv mentor Aaron Ranger. Aaron led the group through icebreakers and improv games in the first part of the day to build the team and in the afternoon led the group through story writing activities. The youth then split up into groups that would collaborate on the story that was planned. The groups were Acting, Directing and Costume Design, those areas were mentored by Joshua Manyheads for Directing and Alison Stalker for Costume Design. We then had a day for the individual groups to prepare for filming day.



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Day 2 of the Reztopian Storyjam, the students started filming their Horror/Suspense short film. The film was titled, "Recess Ritual". All the teams worked hard to film the story in one day. Everyone on the teams stepped up and we were able to complete filming.

With the film being scheduled to screen at the Run As One Music Festival, editing and post-production had to start immediately. To add to the mood of the film, Kainai music artist, Jared Tailfeathers was brought in to add sound effects and a soundtrack.

We completed the film in time and Recess Ritual was screened at the Run As One Music Festival and was received very well. Congratulations to the youth and everyone involved in completing the project in such a short amount of time.

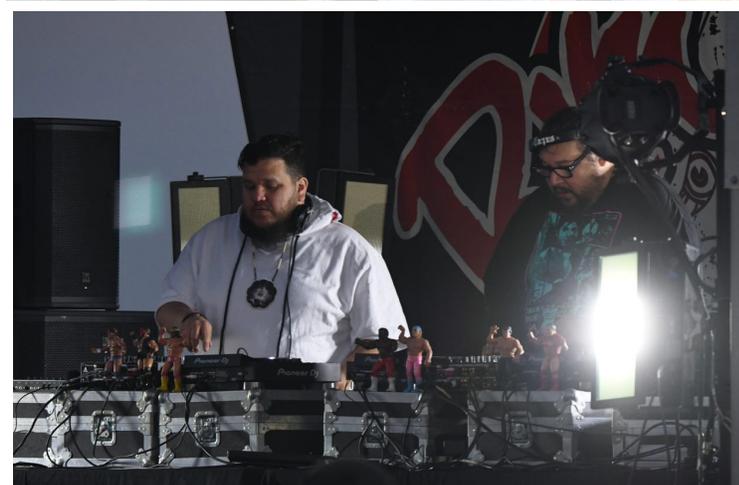
Our week ended with our annual Music Festival. Our annual Music Fest was hosted differently as we followed Covid-19 protocols. We created Pods for cohorts to enjoy the festivities. We originally planned for 30 pods but based on the amount of participants, we extended it to 38 pods. Our annual youth event included local talent from a variety of different genres.

Our event provides a platform for local artisans to showcase their talent from dancing, to singing and performing. This event also showcases Headliners that are positive role models for our youth; these individuals provide positive influences as they are advocates for Mental Wellness, MMIWG, ecosystem, etc. The Headliners use their music as a platform to bring awareness to First Nations issues. They also inspire the youth to continue to reach for their artistic goals. This year marked the 17th Annual Run As One Music Festival, making it one of the longest running Indigenous music festivals in Canada. 17 years ago, the Music Festival started out with 4 youth, Richard Running Rabbit, Eddie Wolf Child, Joni Big Old Man and Armond Duck Chief who led by example with confidence and perseverance, they showcased their talents and made history as our event has grown into an extravaganza that gives community members an opportunity to share the stage with more established Indigenous performers from across Canada.

This years Music Festival was organized by our very Own Vanessa Buckskin and Tangee Scalplock with support from the Run As One Committee and other Siksika Health programs.



# Run As One



Run As One Music Festival Photos by Tawny Holloway

# UPCOMING EVENTS & ACTIVITES

**September 1** - Head Start Registration

First Day of School - TBA

**September 13** - FASD and Suicide Awareness Day Drive In Movie

**September 25** - Indigenous Trail Run Series - BCHP

**September 30** - Truth & Reconciliation Day

& Orange Shirt Day /Activities TBA

## SEPTEMBER 2021

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1 Head Start taking Registration	2	3	4
5	6 Labour Day Holiday	7	8	9	10	11
12	13 FASD & Suicide Awareness Drive - In Movie	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30 Truth & Reconciliation Day		

# Siksika Health Services Covid-19 Reopening Plan



## Siksika Health Services COVID-19 Considerations for Reopening

Under GREEN - low COVID risk level status, the following public health recommendations can help Siksikawa safely plan and attend gatherings, events and activities as we make progress together on the COVID-19 pandemic.

	Public Health Measures	Outdoor Gatherings	Indoor Gatherings	Sports & Activities	Organizations	Additional Safety Precautions
<b>Community Reopening LEVEL 1</b> COVID cases: stable Vaccine Dose 1: 55% Vaccine Dose 2*: 35%	For Levels 1-3: Mandatory mask use in Siksika Nation-owned buildings determined by facility owner/manager. Screening or self-screening for COVID-19 symptoms and exposure in Siksika Nation-owned buildings determined by facility owner/manager. Gatherings for people not fully immunized: physical distancing and masks recommended. Gatherings for fully immunized* people: masks and physical distancing not required around other fully immunized people. If sick, stay home and get tested. Confirmed COVID cases and close contacts isolate for minimum 10 days.	Private & Organized Gatherings: up to 25 people Siksika organized events may require masking and physical distancing, regardless of immunization status.	Indoor spaces: occupancy 1/6 fire code Arbour: 25 people Gyms: 12 people In-home gatherings: household members only	Some outdoor sports activities may resume with physical distancing, and in small cohorts (12 people including instructors/coaches)	Businesses: remain open Schools: remain open Meetings held virtually when possible	<b>To further reduce the risk of COVID-19 spread:</b> Keep physical distance (at least 2 metres) from others who are not in your household/cohort; Wear a mask when physical distancing is not possible, especially indoors; Wash or sanitize hands regularly, especially after touching commonly touched surfaces; Clean and disinfect commonly touched surfaces often; Refrain from sharing food/drinks, and avoid using common serving utensils for food/drinks; Cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue or your elbow;
<b>Community Reopening LEVEL 2</b> COVID cases: low Vaccine Dose 1: 70% Vaccine Dose 2*: 50%	Gatherings for fully immunized* people: masks and physical distancing not required around other fully immunized people. If sick, stay home and get tested.	Private Gatherings: up to 25 people Organized Gatherings: up to 150 people Siksika organized events may require masking and physical distancing, regardless of immunization status.	Indoor spaces: occupancy 1/3 fire code Arbour: 75 people Gyms: 25 people In-home gatherings: 15 people from up to two households if all are fully immunized	<b>Indoor:</b> 1/3 fire code up to 25 people <b>Outdoor:</b> Private: 25 people Organized: 150 people	Businesses: remain open Schools: remain open Small, in-person meetings possible: up to 15 people	Refrain from sharing food/drinks, and avoid using common serving utensils for food/drinks; Cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue or your elbow;
<b>Community Reopening LEVEL 3</b> COVID cases: low Vaccine Dose 1: 80% Vaccine Dose 2*: 70%	Confirmed COVID cases and close contacts isolate for minimum 10 days.	Private Gatherings: up to 50 people Organized Gatherings: up to 250 people Siksika organized events may require masking and physical distancing, regardless of immunization status.	Indoor spaces: occupancy 2/3 fire code Arbour: 150 people Gyms: 50 people In-home gatherings: 25 people if all are fully immunized	<b>Indoor:</b> 2/3 fire code up to 50 people <b>Outdoor:</b> Private: 50 people Organized: 250 people	Businesses: remain open Schools: remain open In-person meetings possible: recommended occupancy 2/3 fire code	Avoid non-essential travel outside Siksika. Siksikawa are encouraged to consider these additional measures for gatherings that are larger than those recommended.
<b>Community Reopening LEVEL 4</b> COVID cases: low Vaccine Dose 1: 85% Vaccine Dose 2*: 75%	For Level 4: If sick, stay home and get tested. Confirmed COVID cases and close contacts isolate for minimum 10 days.	All COVID-19 public health recommendations lifted.	All COVID-19 public health recommendations lifted.	All COVID-19 public health recommendations lifted.	All COVID-19 public health recommendations lifted.	Siksikawa are encouraged to consider these additional measures for gatherings that are larger than those recommended.

After careful consideration, Siksika Health Services' public health team has developed a COVID Reopening Plan that outlines recommendations for planning and attending gatherings, events, and activities on Siksika when Covid-19 risk is at the level GREEN. The Reopening Plan expands on the guidance previously provided under the GREEN-low risk level status, based on Siksika's community immunity level. The Reopening Plan outlines recommendations, not requirements, for Siksikawa to make informed choices to keep themselves and others safe as we make continued progress through the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Reopening Plan progresses based on the percentages of the partially and fully vaccinated people on our Nation, and the

number and stability of active COVID cases managed by Siksika Health Services. As immunization percentages are met, and COVID cases remain low, we can more safely move to the recommendations outlined in the next level. COVID-19 cases and transmission will continue to be monitored, and Siksika Health Services' COVID-19 Response Team will remain operational and make support available for Nation members impacted by COVID-19. If required, progression from one level to the next may be paused, or it may be necessary to return to the previous level in response to rising COVID-19 cases, and/or health resources capacity.

Siksika's Public Health team reminds us that COVID-19 and associated risks have not

been resolved completely and that these risks are more pronounced for certain populations:

- Unvaccinated individuals
- Eligible individuals who are not yet vaccinated have not built up immunity to coronavirus from a vaccine.
- Children under the age of 12 – a COVID vaccine has not yet been approved in Canada for this population. As a result, this age group does not yet have access to the immunity to coronavirus from a vaccine.
- Immunocompromised – those with weakened immune systems have a reduced ability to fight infections and other diseases.

Siksika, let's continue to work together to keep ourselves and one another safe.

# Vaccination

Why did you get vaccinated? It could be to protect yourself, our elders, our families, or it could be to protect our community as a whole. Siksika is strong because Siksika cares for one another. We asked a few community members this question; here is their response:

"To keep my family safe... ..My son wanted it so he can go back to 'normal' n hang with friends."

"...it honestly made me feel more protected and safer."

"To protect my family, especially my babygirl. An also to protect our elders."

We live amongst some vulnerable community members. There are some Siksikawa who struggle with underlying health issues; studies show that individuals with underlying health concerns are at a higher risk of contracting a severe case of COVID-19. These are the ones we need to protect, including children under the age of 12 who are not eligible to receive the COVID vaccine at this time.

Immunization is the single most effective means of protecting yourself and your loved ones from COVID-19. Approved COVID vaccines, such as the Moderna and Pfizer vaccines offered at the Siksika Health & Wellness Centre, work! Two doses of the Moderna or Pfizer vaccine offers at least 90% protection against severe illness outcomes from COVID-19.

#SiksikaCares #SiksikaStrong



We're in this  
What's your re  
Vaccina



Omahkit  
"Elder"



Niksokowaiks  
"Family"



Iihkawa  
"Communit

#Siksikastrong



together  
reason to be  
ated?



Ásitapiiks ki Pokaiks  
"Youth and children"

iki  
nity"

#Siksikacares

# Boxing Camp

THE ISCA IN PARTNERSHIP WITH  
BOXING ALBERTA PRESENTS:



## BOXING SUMMER DAY CAMP



AUGUST 22ND 2021  
MANY GUNS BOXING &  
FITNESS CENTRE



10:00 AM TO 12:00PM - MORNING SESSIONS  
LUNCH BREAK (PROVIDED)  
12:30 PM TO 3:30PM - AFTERNOON SESSIONS

FOR YOUTH AGES 10YRS AND OLDER  
NO COST TO PARTICIPATE  
REGISTER ONLINE TODAY  
LIMITED TO 20 PARTICIPANTS



THIS BOXING CAMP WAS DONATED BY  
2020 ISCA SUMMER FITNESS CHALLENGE CHAMPION  
STRATER CROWFOOT  
WE GREATLY APPRECIATE YOUR GENEROSITY

INNER FRIENDLY ACTIVITIES - MALE AND FEMALE WELCOME

ITWORK - SHADOW BOXING - HAND PADS - SKILL WORK

Siksika Health Services was honored to have been able to host the Indigenous Sports Council of Alberta and Boxing Alberta with a FREE Boxing Summer Day Camp. The Camp; took place at the Many Guns Boxing & Fitness Centre.

The one day camp took place on August 22 and was open to youth ages 10 and older. There was no cost to join and lunch was provided. Activities were all beginner friendly.

For more information about the Many Guns Boxing and Fitness Center, Call 403-962-0038.



# BLACKFOOT PRAYER

**Ayao Apistatoki  
Ayao Napi Natosi  
Ayao Iihsipaitapiiyo'pa  
Kitsiksimatsimmohpinnaan  
Isspommookinnaan Annoh'k  
Ksisstsiko  
Kimmokinnaan  
Ais'stamattsookinnaan  
Soka'ipiys, ikkina' piyi,  
Mokama'ta'piyi  
Aya Kiimma'tookinnaan  
Nookoossinnaaniksi  
Ninnaaniksi  
Niksisstsinnaaniksi  
Naahsinnaaniksi  
Ok kaamotaani  
Misamipaitapiysinni**

**Calling Creator  
Calling the Old Man/The Sun  
Calling the Source of Life  
We welcome you  
We ask for your Help on this  
day  
Be kind to us  
Show us  
All that is good, all that is  
gentle and all that is honest  
I ask that kindness shown to  
our Children and to our  
fathers  
Mothers and our  
Grandparents  
and to be saved and given a  
long life.**